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SUBJECT: DAILY IRAQI WEBSITE MONITORING - September 7, 2005

SUMMARY: Discussion on the Constitution was the major editorial theme of Iraqi, Arabic language websites on September 7, 2005. END SUMMARY.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS  
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- [1A.](#) "The Pending Constitution" (Iraq4all News, 9/7)
- [1B.](#) "The Arab League and the Iraqi Constitution" (Al-Jeeran, 9/7)
- [1C.](#) "Leave Iraqis Alone" (Makany, 9/7)
- [1D.](#) "Iraq after Constitutional Ratification" (Al-Bayan, 9/7)

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SELECTED COMMENTARIES  
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- [1A.](#) "The Pending Constitution"  
(Editorial by Abdul Zahra Al-Rikabi - Iraq4all News -  
<http://iraq4all.org>)

"President Bush hailed the `merits' of the Iraqi constitution saying it included many guarantees to protect basic human rights including religious rights, the right of assembly, and the right to freedom of expression, but the American president didn't point out the dangerous and destructive implications within the constitution that would divide and eliminate Iraq--and president Bush's praises were considered a blessing for the American coalition's efforts serving the U.S. occupation. There's no doubt that America's local allies played an obvious role in many scenarios in Iraq including that of the constitution after its draft revealed items representing an attempt to divide the country into two states with full economic autonomy based on strategic oil resources; where the draft constitution states that one or more provinces have the right to form a federal region with diplomatic missions in embassies to follow up on cultural, social, and development issues. As for oil revenues, the lion's share will be for the southern region including: nine provinces receiving no less than 60%, with the northern Kurdish region receiving 20% with a chance to seize no less than 30% if they takeover Kirkuk, while only leftovers will go to the central region including Baghdad and three other Sunni provinces with a scant 10% or 20% of revenues. That's in addition to granting these regions the right to invest in unexplored oil fields including the southern (Majnoon) field which represents a huge strategic oil resource and the northern fields already being explored by international oil companies who've signed contracts with the Kurds. We can say that more than one dimension will prevent the draft constitution from passage during the referendum. That includes the sectarian component, where the three Sunni provinces of Mosul, Tikrit, and Ramadi can reject the draft, and the same thing can be said about Shiite provinces where the Sadr movement is the strongest Shiite faction opposing the constitution (from an early stage due to its trend towards division and separation), in addition to other Shiite secular movements with an active presence in left wing and liberal movements. All of which means the political process adopted by the U.S. occupation will return to square one, which serves the occupation's interests in drawing the attention of Iraqis towards their usual political drama beginning with the governing council, elections, and finally the constitution pending a referendum which will not be the final chapter of the American play."

- [1B.](#) "The Arab League and the Iraqi Constitution"  
(Editorial by Jaber Habib Jaber - Al-Jeeran -  
<http://www.aljeeran.net>)

"No constitution has aroused interest in the way that the Iraqi constitution has, and not only on a local level but an international one symbolized by worldwide congratulations from the U.N., U.S., U.K., and the European Union in what all described as the cornerstone of the political process. As for the regional and Arab level, the most peculiar position was that of the Arab League's Secretary General. For his interference came at a time when political parties were negotiating the draft constitution and his position sided with one of the negotiating parties leading to a further entrenchment in their position.

"This position might be justified by an affinity over the identity of Iraq, but perhaps this role could have been more effectively promoted through envoys sent by the League to mediate between negotiating parties and provide advice, which is the same role played by the U.N.'s envoy, Ashraf Qadhi, who encouraged participation in the constitutional process. So the Secretary General of the Arab League might have had a better chance today if he or those before him had addressed the concerns and crises of the Iraqi people, whether during the Ba'athist era or after. Iraqis have a great deal of bitter memories regarding the role of the Arab League towards Iraq. Where was the League when Kurds were killed by chemicals in Halabja and had their villages wiped out? Where were they when marshes were destroyed after seven thousand years of existence? The League might have justified its position by saying it didn't want to clash with regimes, but did it attempt to urge member countries to take notice of the suffering of Iraqis fleeing the regime's brutality, did it call upon countries to grant access to those refugees instead of drowning in deep oceans or ending up exiled in distant lands? Before the elections, the League's Secretary General met with representatives calling to boycott the elections, so did he make use of his political experience and advise them to take part in the process that would finally lead to a constitution? Did he inform them about how their absence would affect the balance of powers, and weaken the Arabs' side in front of the Kurds? Or did he, like everyone else, bet on the failure of the Iraqi elections? The Secretary General expressed concern over the Arab nature of Iraq as if it were a piece of clothing to be taken off at any time, or as if Iraqis were in need of advice over how to maintain their Arab origin; but these same concerns weren't expressed over the peace agreement in Sudan which granted the southern region of the country the right to self determination, nor did he oppose Libya withdrawing from the League, nor did he condemn Arab nations normalizing relations with Israel, nor did he call for a special session despite hundreds of Iraqis being killed on daily basis. But he didn't hesitate to call for a meeting in the resort of Sharm Al-Sheikh to encourage tourism in the area. So neither the history of the Arab League nor its charter allows it to interfere in the decisions of Iraqis, especially after abandoning them to terrorists and murderers."

#### [C. "Leave Iraqis Alone"](#)

(Uncited Editorial - Makany -  
<http://www.makany.com/go2news.php?url=8824108> )

"Despite some of the constitution's articles imposed through power sharing, the Iraqi constitution is considered a quantum leap relative to the constitutions prevalent in the Arab world. The most important thing in the nascent Iraqi constitution is that it includes several guarantees to avoid returning to the tyranny that Iraq suffered for 1,400 years. Federalism will ensure no repeats of the 'great leader' or 'God's gift on earth' which Arab countries in general and Iraqis in particular are afflicted with. Let Amr Musa, the Arab flag bearer, allow us to disagree with him in his reservations about us not specifying the Arab nature of Iraq in the constitution by saying he interfered in a matter that should not concern him because this is the Iraqi people's choice and he should respect this choice. Second, he should remember that Iraqis didn't receive anything but destruction, killings, and deportation from the Arab nature of Iraq. One of the advantages of the new Iraqi constitution is it includes many guarantees for human rights and freedoms. Those who cry about the Arab nature of Iraq and fear its division actually want to reinstate tyranny on our people, and that won't happen. A piece of advice to those who whine and mourn about Iraq's identity: Let Iraqis take care of themselves."

#### [D. "Iraq after Constitutional Ratification"](#)

(Editorial by Abdul Zahra Al-Rikabi - Al Bayan -  
<http://www.albayan.ae/servlet/Satellite?cid=1125289812001&pageName=Albayan%2FArticle%2FFullDetail&c=Article>)

"Iraqi's parliament settled its talks over the Iraqi constitution without making any changes to the draft. Five million copies will be published and distributed to voters in an obvious challenge to Sunnis and a rejection of various political party and partisan group demands which will lead Iraq to an unpredictable future. The third article of the draft constitution states, 'Iraq is multi-ethnic and multi-religious, it is part of the Islamic world, and the Arab people in it are part of the Arab nation.' This article, in addition to federalism, will constitute a gloomy image of Iraqi unity and identity scattered among political movements, narrow-minded interests, and sectarian entities. The Iraqi constitutional project needs a review, a review that guarantees Iraq's unity and maintains its independence and the unity of its land. A public rejection of the draft constitution won't end in rejection and denouncement of the document but will go beyond and stoke what Iraqis most fear - civil war. Salih Al-Mutlag, one of the top Sunni Arab

negotiators expressed his fears by showing his resentment over the current constitution. He said if it is approved in the referendum Iraqis will say the results were faked which would be very bad. The political and security situation could spiral out of control if the constitution is rejected by a two-thirds majority in three provinces and that will increase the sectarian tension. The American administration must establish a policy of not letting Iraq drown in sectarian quagmire and civil war--especially with plans for an American military withdrawal after the approval of the draft constitution. The Americans must take on their historic responsibility for creating a national consensus to rebuild post-occupation Iraq and prevent a 'Katrina constitution' which threatens Iraqi unity on one side and Arab/Islamic identity on the other."

SATTERFIELD